

30. (Amended) The method according to claim 1, characterized in that said metal coating [consists] is selected from the group consisting of copper, aluminum, gold [or] and silver.

31. (Amended) The method according to claim 1, characterized in that said mark is selected from the group consisting of a logotype, a name, a trade mark, an image or a safety marking.

III. Remarks

A marked up copy of the claims is attached as **EXHIBIT A**. A clean copy of the claims is attached as **EXHIBIT B**.

All or some of the pending claims 1–2 and 18–33 are objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.75 or have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §§ 112, 102 and 103. Applicants' responses to these objections and rejections are as follows:

A. As to Objection to Claims 19–29 Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.75(c)

Claims 19–29 are objected to as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicants have rewritten claim 19 to refer to the fibrous web. Claims 20–29 are now dependent upon claim 19.

B. As to Objection to Claim 18 Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.75

Claim 18 is objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.75 as being a substantial duplicate of claim 2. Claim 18 has been cancelled.

C. As to Objection to Claims 2, 18, 22 and 26–29 Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 2, 18, 22 and 26–29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which

Applicants regard as the Invention. Applicants have amended the claims in response to the specific rejections set forth on page 3 of the Examiner's Action.

**D. As to Rejection of Claims 1, 2 and 18–33
Under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103**

The Examiner's Action sets forth four rejections of one or more of the above-referenced claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) and § 103(a). These rejections are as follows:

1. Claims 1, 19, 21, 24, 28 and 31–33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 6,306,493 B1 to Brownfield (henceforth, the "Brownfield patent");
2. Claims 2, 18, 20 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Brownfield patent, in view of United States Patent No. 4,738,197 to Malkia;
3. Claims 22, 25, 26, 27 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Brownfield patent, in view of United States Patent No. 5,706,106 to Monaghan; and
4. Claim 23 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Brownfield patent, in view of United States Patent No. 5,413,629 to Yasui et al.

(a) The Brownfield patent is not properly cited as a reference.

The Brownfield patent has an effective date as a reference of July 30, 1998, which is the filing date of the application issuing as the Brownfield patent. In the present Application, Applicants have claimed not only the benefit under 35 U.S.C. § 371 of International Patent Application No. PCT/EP99/03286 filed May 12, 1999, but also the benefit under 35 U.S.C. § 119 of German Patent Application No. 19822605.5, filed May 20, 1998. Applicants note that the Filing Receipt for the present Application identifies both the aforementioned International and German Applications.

German Patent Application No. 19822605.5 supports Applicants' present claims 1, 2 and 19–33. Applicants submit herewith as **EXHIBIT C** a copy of Published German Patent

Application No. 19822605.5, and as **EXHIBIT D**, a copy of Published International Patent Application No. PCT/EP99/03286. A comparison of **EXHIBITS C** and **D** reveals that they are identical except for two additions in the specification of the International Patent Application at page 9, line 24, to page 10, line 10, and at page 10, lines 18–21. These additions are not relied on as support for Applicants' claims 1–2 and 19–33.

The present United States Patent Application is a translation of International Patent Application No. PCT/EP99/03286, from which it is a national (U.S.) phase filing. Accordingly, the present Application is also a translation of German Patent Application No. 19822605.5, except for the additional disclosure in the specification of the International Application identified hereabove. As claims 1–2 and 19–33 are supported by the present Application, claims 1–2 and 19–33 must also be supported by German Patent Application No. 19822605.5, since, as noted above, the present Application is a translation of that German Patent Application with two immaterial additions.

Accordingly, the effective filing date of the present Application is the May 20, 1998 filing date of German Patent Application No. 19822605.5. As this filing date is more than two months prior to the July 30, 1998 filing date of the Brownfield patent, the Brownfield patent cannot be cited as a reference in any of the rejections of Applicants' claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) and § 103(a) and must be withdrawn as a reference.


The withdrawal of the Brownfield patent as a reference renders all four rejections of Applicants' claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) and § 103(a) untenable because the disclosure in the Brownfield patent was relied on by the Examiner in support of each of these rejections of the claims. Accordingly, these rejections, being untenable, should be withdrawn.

IV. **Conclusion**

It is believed that the above constitutes a complete response under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111 and that all bases of rejection stated in the Office Action have been adequately rebutted or overcome. A Notice of Allowance in the next Office Action is, therefore, requested. The Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned if any matter that can reasonably be expected to be resolved in a telephone conference is believed to impede the allowance of the pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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